

HOUSE BILL 2128
By McMillan

AN ACT relative to domestic violence.

WHEREAS, this general assembly finds that domestic violence is a serious issue with enormous impact in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence causes employees of businesses to miss work due to the injuries sustained from domestic violence and due to absenteeism from the fear of potential violent acts; and

WHEREAS, such leave from work is costly to employers, including the state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence adds costs to the health care system of Tennessee, including the TennCare program, due to the treatment of the injuries suffered by its victims, many of whom are uninsured; and

WHEREAS, it has been estimated the businesses on a national level lose a staggering 3 to 5 billion dollars a year in medical expenses as a result of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, it has been estimated that businesses lose an additional 100 million dollars in wages through sick leave, absenteeism and lost productivity from domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee also spends money to incarcerate the offenders;

WHEREAS, a 1995 federal study by the department of health and human services estimated that Tennessee spends approximately \$44 million a year in the costs associated with domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Economic Council for Women has begun a study of the costs of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Tennessee general assembly that the economic impact of domestic violence in Tennessee should be studied further by the Tennessee Economic Council on Women.

SECTION 2. The general assembly also finds that additional resources need to be provided to insure a study of the economic impact of domestic violence reviews public expenditures of the costs to employers including the public sector, costs to the health care resources of the state, the costs to the courts for handling such matters and the costs of incarceration.

SECTION 3. The Tennessee Economic Council on Women is hereby directed to conduct a comprehensive, thorough study of domestic violence in Tennessee. Such study shall review and propose methods and strategies to reduce domestic violence, to bring employers into partnerships with their employees to address domestic violence concerns, and educational initiatives to address the root causes of domestic violence.

SECTION 4. The Tennessee Economic Council on Women shall prepare a report to be delivered to each member of the general assembly and to the governor by January 15, 2006.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.